



# BHĀGAVATA PRADĪPIKĀ

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*Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam*

*A Monthly E-Magazine from the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha with Illuminating Perspectives on the Srimad-Bhagavatam*

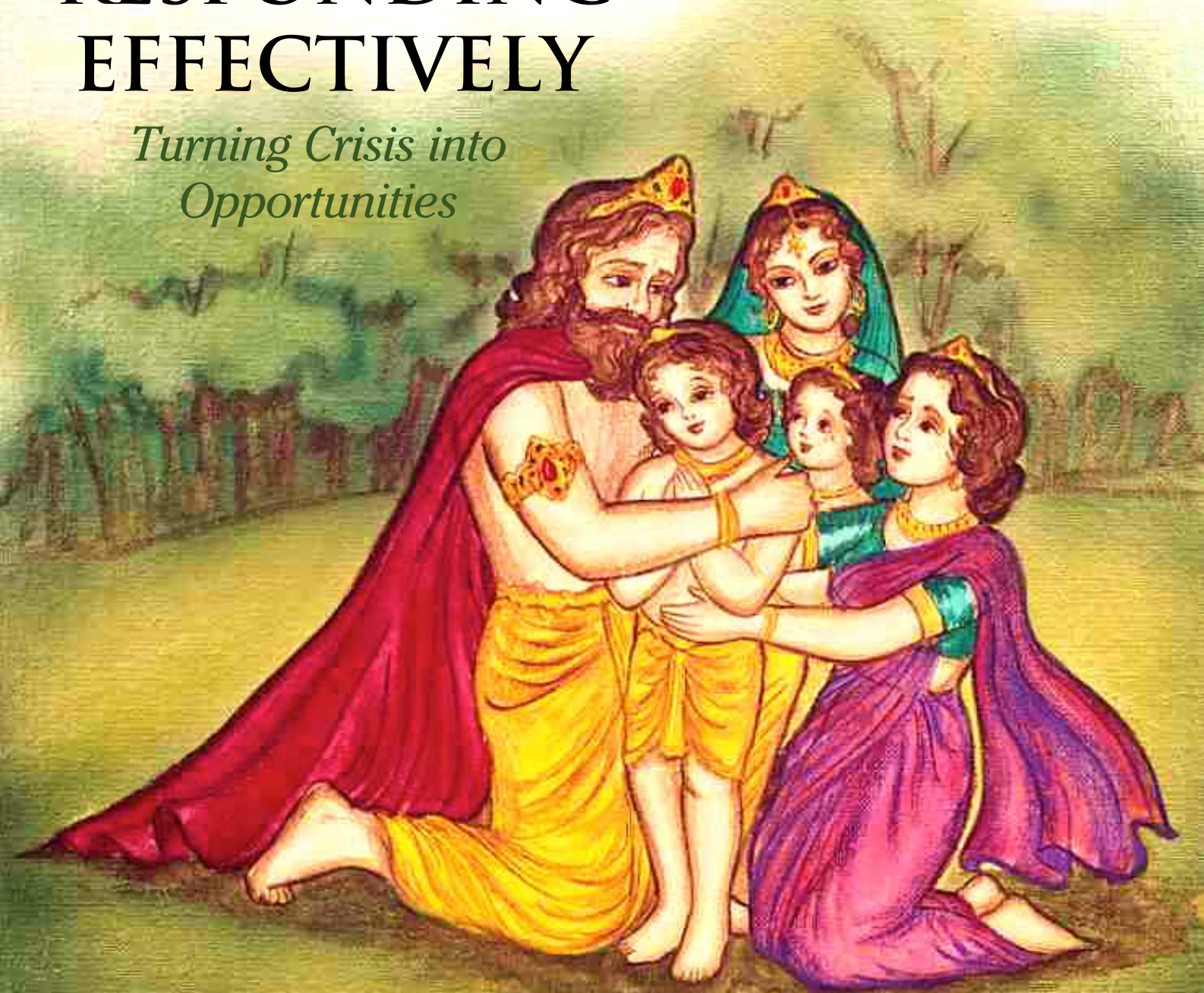
Dedicated to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda,  
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

## THE ART OF RESPONDING EFFECTIVELY

*Turning Crisis into  
Opportunities*

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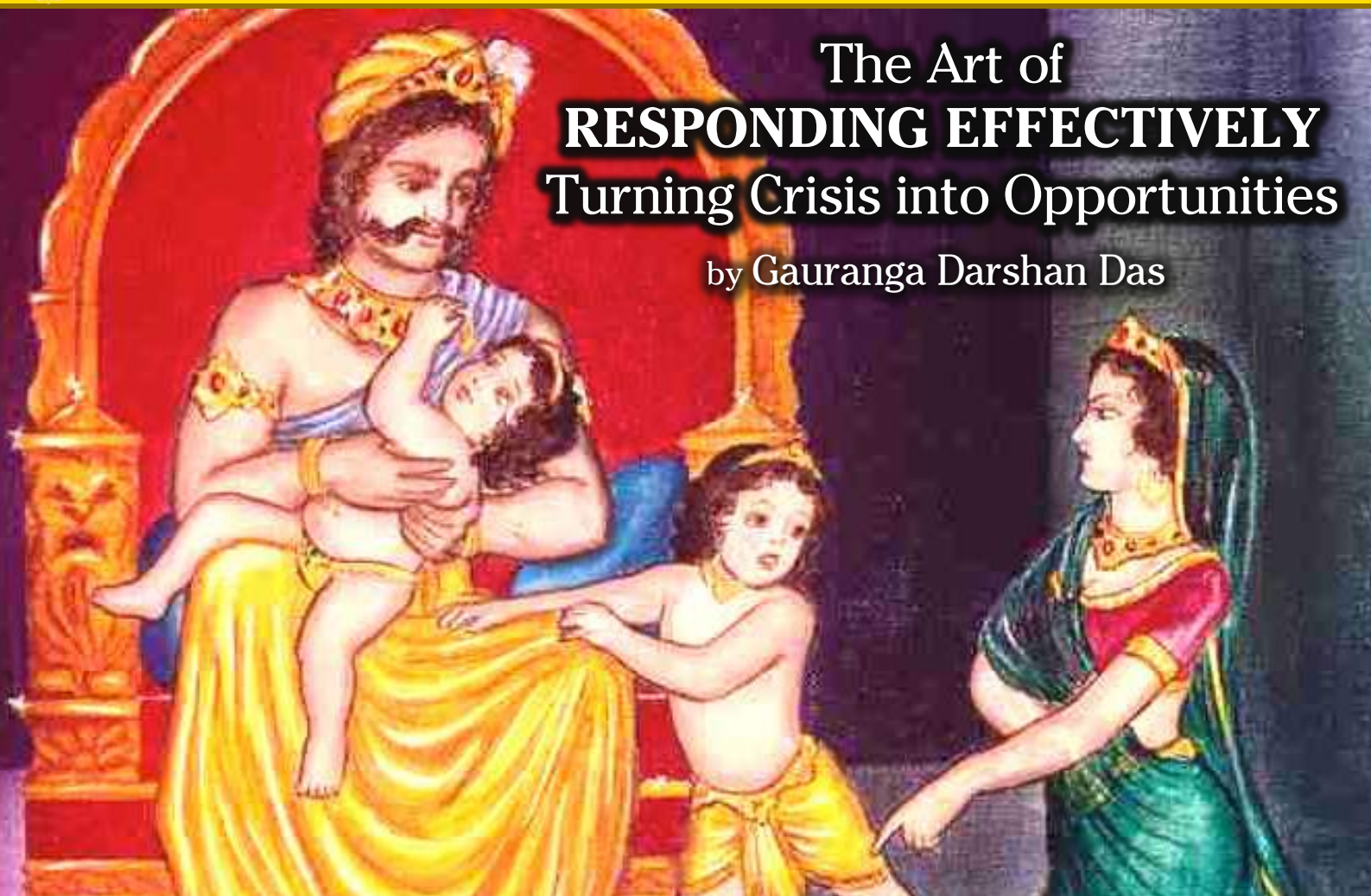






# The Art of RESPONDING EFFECTIVELY Turning Crisis into Opportunities

by Gauranga Darshan Das



*It's best to act appropriately in a situation rather than regret later!  
It's better to regret for one's poor response rather than justifying it!  
It's worse to justify one's impulsive act and deny responsibility for its result!*

Did someone ever mistreat you? Did you ever hurt someone? How had been your response in either case? A sensitive heart regrets when one fails to respond sensitively. Having said or done something that pained someone or yourself, one often thinks, “Oh I could have been polite!” “Maybe I should not have taken it so seriously!” “Alas! I overreacted, I misunderstood!” But learning to respond appropriately in a situation can turn crisis into great opportunities.

## Poor Responses of a Weak Heart

One reacts impulsively at times, due to the heat of situations or lack of maturity. Even if one knows what is right and what is wrong, one's weaknesses do not allow one to act aptly. The heart's weakness is often due to egoistic pride, undue attachments and unfair obligations.

King Uttānapāda had two wives, Sunīti and Suruci. He loved his younger wife Suruci, but neglected Sunīti. One day, Uttānapāda was sitting on his throne with Suruci's son Uttama, on his lap. Then Sunīti's son Dhruva also came there desiring to sit on father's lap, but Uttānapāda didn't welcome him.

Suruci then spoke to Dhruva proudly, that because he was not born from her womb, he was not qualified to sit on his father's lap.

The childhood innocence of Dhruva didn't see any distinction between Suruci and Sunīti, but the envious attitude of Suruci showed him such difference. By worshiping the Supreme Lord, one can become free from the cycle of birth and death. But arrogant Suruci told Dhruva that he could take birth in her womb by worshiping the Lord. Such is the nature of pride.







A child naturally deserves affection from an elder. No elder refuses to fondle a child when the child himself approaches for it. What to speak of a father and a king? A father is supposed to treat all his children equally. And a king's responsibility is to take care of all his citizens equally. Uttānapāda was both a king and a father, but failed to treat his two sons, Uttama and Dhruva equally. His favoritism towards Suruci made him indifferent to Dhruva and ignore his duty as a father. He did not even stop Suruci who was unnecessarily outrageous.

His innocent desire being thwarted, Dhruva was disappointed. Further, the insulting words of his stepmother and the silence of his father broke his tender heart.

An earthen pot, once broken, is not reusable. Even if one manages to put the broken pieces of the pot together and makes it usable again, one has to be extremely careful in handling that pot, much more than a new pot. Any slight mishandling of such a repaired pot breaks it and makes it irreparable. Relationships are also like that. If one is not sensitive in dealings, that could break someone's heart permanently.

## Just Response of a Devoted Heart

Hissing like a snake, Dhruva went to his mother Sunīti, crying. Sunīti was already in pain, being neglected by her husband. Now she became devastated to see her child insulted by her co-wife.

Being a glorious lady and a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Sunīti spontaneously pacified Dhruva with wise words to avoid any negative feelings to overcome him. She told him three things in particular, "(i) Never desire harm for others who might have caused you pain, (ii) Everyone suffers due to one's own past deeds, (iii) Whatever may be your desire, to fulfill that, you need to worship the Supreme Lord."

*tam eva vatsāśraya bhṛtya-vatsalaṁ  
mumukṣubhir mṛgya-padābja-paddhatim  
ananya-bhāve nija-dharma-bhāvite  
manasy avasthāpya bhajasva pūruṣam*

Sunīti told Dhruva, "My dear boy, you also should take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is very kind to His devotees. Persons seeking liberation from the cycle of birth and death always take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord in devotional service. Becoming purified by executing your allotted occupation, just situate the Supreme Personality of Godhead in your heart, and without deviating for a moment, engage always in His service." (4.8.22)

**Our good consciousness can positively influence others, while our poor attitude can negatively affect others.**

Situations are not within our control, but our response is. Thus, instead of accusing Suruci or Uttānapāda, Sunīti maturely directed Dhruva towards Lord Vāsudeva. When others hurt us, it is difficult to see any good in their words or actions. But Sunīti told Dhruva that Suruci was correct in saying that 'one should worship the Supreme Lord to fulfill one's desires.' Sunīti valued this statement more and ignored to react to all the other offensive statements of Suruci.

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "Both the mother and the son were lamenting Dhruva Mahārāja's having been insulted by his stepmother and his father's not having taken any step on this issue. But mere lamentation is useless-one should find out the means to mitigate one's

lamentation. Thus both mother and son decided to take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord because that is the only solution to all material problems.” (SB 4.8.24 P)

Blaming, arguing and lamenting are natural in calamity, but one should surpass that stage to maturely consider what best could one do in such a situation. And the best thing to do always is to seek God’s shelter, apart from doing whatever else is humanly possible. One can be hopeful in the most hopeless situation by taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa.

Our good consciousness can positively influence others, while our poor attitude can negatively affect others. We can see this contrast between the characters of Sunīti and Suruci.

Having heard from his mother that Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa fulfills all of one’s desires, Dhruva left home to worship Him. However, due to the insult done by Suruci, he developed an ambitious desire to attain a position superior to his father and even Lord Brahmā. He was so ambitious for this position that he didn’t even accept the advice of Nārada Muni to return home. Finally, Nārada instructed him to chant, “*Om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*,” to attain his goal. Dhruva then practiced bhakti with great determination and in six months, he attained the darśana of Lord Viṣṇu, who blessed him in various ways.

**The intelligence that identifies one’s own faults is wonderful, the heart that repents for them is glorious, and the conscience that endeavors not to repeat them is admirable.**

## Honest Regret After an Unjust Response

When little Dhruva went to the forest alone, Uttānapāda lamented for his hardhearted behavior towards Dhruva and Sunīti. It was not that Uttānapāda didn’t have affection for Dhruva. He certainly loved his son. But due to his excessive attachment towards Suruci, he couldn’t welcome Dhruva or stop Suruci from chastising Dhruva. He honestly regretted for his misdeed. He condemned himself for being a henpecked husband and an irresponsible father. But by this time, Dhruva had already left home!



Some errors are irreversible. We can’t always undo something even if we realize that what we did was inappropriate. Sometimes, although we realize our mistake, and try to rectify, that opportunity has already slipped out of our hands. For instance, after a student has just come out of the examination hall submitting his mathematics answer sheet, even if he realizes that he had used a wrong formula to solve a problem, he can’t rectify it anymore. Similarly, even if a cook realizes that he has put more salt than required in a preparation, he can’t undo it. Having responded with a wrong answer in the interview, an employment seeker cannot go back and prove his knowledge in front of the interviewer.

Wasted time will not come back, and spoken words cannot be taken back. Thus one should be learn to act appropriately on the spur of the moment. That is best.

But the good news is that there is a second-best thing. One can remember one’s mistakes and be cautious not to repeat them in future. Having failed in an exam, a student can be more careful in the next exam. Having spoiled a preparation, a cook can make it better the next day. But the impetus to improve oneself comes from an honest repentance for one’s mistakes and sincere efforts to rectify them.





Uttānapāda started treating Sunīti with love. When Dhruva returned after attaining benedictions from Lord Viṣṇu, Uttānapāda received him with warmth and affection. Noble hearted Sunīti didn't hold any grudges towards Suruci or Uttama, but took them in the same palanquin as herself. Even Suruci gave up her inimical attitude towards Dhruva, and blessed him to live long. Dhruva gave up his grudge towards Suruci and bowed down at her feet. Dhruva gave up his anger towards Uttama and hugged him. When Dhruva grew up, Uttānapāda made him the king.

## Bhakti Makes One Respond Appropriately

Suruci acted impulsively due to pride and envy. Uttānapāda acted imprudently due to attachment to wife. Dhruva acted obstinately due to material ambition. Sunīti acted maturely due to her devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Because Sunīti herself was a great devotee, she could inspire Dhruva to take to devotional service. Although Dhruva was ambitious, because he received the guidance of great devotees like Sunīti and Nārada, he

was purified and elevated. Although Uttānapāda neglected his glorious wife and son, he honestly repented for his misdeeds and took to good behavior soon. Although Suruci was envious and proud, the kindness of Sunīti and spiritual success of Dhruva brought positive transformation in her.

Thus it is bhakti, or devotional service unto Lord Kṛṣṇa, that ultimately brings about ideal transformation in a person and makes one respond suitably in different situations. All our chanting, hearing and other devotional practices should make us act appropriately on the spur of the moment. That may not happen overnight, but a sincere practice of bhakti, helps one – (i) identify where one needs to improve, (ii) sincerely desire to overcome those shortcomings, (iii) pray for improvement, (iv) seek guidance, (v) cultivate right intentions, and (vi) endeavor to act sensitively and wisely.

It's a wonderful journey that all of us need to take up in lives, from an impulsive negative response to spontaneous positive response in trying situations. Whether the journey is long or short depends on how sincere are we to travel under wise guidance and sincere practice on the path of devotion. ☀

## VERSE OF THE MONTH

bhaktiṁ muhuḥ pravahatām tvayi me prasaṅgo  
bhūyād ananta mahatām amalāśayānām  
yenāñjasolbaṇam uru-vyasanam bhavābhdhiṁ  
neṣye bhavad-guṇa-kathāmṛta-pāna-mattaḥ

O unlimited Lord, kindly bless me so that I may associate with great devotees who engage in Your transcendental loving service constantly, as the waves of a river constantly flow. Such transcendental devotees are completely situated in an uncontaminated state of life. By the process of devotional service I shall surely be able to cross the nescient ocean of material existence, which is filled with the waves of blazing, firelike dangers. It will be very easy for me, for I am becoming mad to hear about Your transcendental qualities and pastimes, which are eternally existent. (4.9.11)

## Please Give Me the Association of Devotees



The more one makes advancement in devotional service, the more one becomes detached from material opulence and material activity. (SB 4.13.9 P)







**Question:** The Lord says that He takes away the wealth of a person on whom He is specially merciful. Is special mercy of Lord not available to His rich devotees?

**Answer** There are two kinds of opulence. One, which results from one's karma, is material, whereas the other is spiritual.

When a pure devotee is seen to possess exalted material opulence, it is not due to his karma. Rather, it is due to his bhakti. In other words, he is in that position because the Supreme Lord wants him to execute service to Him very easily and opulently.

The special mercy of the Lord for the neophyte devotee is that he becomes materially poor. The Lord orchestrates this so that being frustrated in his repeated attempts at economic development, the devotee ultimately takes solid shelter under the lotus feet of the Lord. This is the Lord's mercy because if a neophyte devotee becomes materially opulent he forgets the service of the Lord. However, if an advanced devotee is favored by the Lord with opulence, it is not material opulence but a spiritual opportunity.

Material opulence offered to the demigods causes forgetfulness of the Lord, but opulence was given to Bali Mahārāja for continuing service to the Lord, which was free from any touch of māyā. (SB 5.24.22 P)

If a human being is born in an aristocratic family or a higher status of life, if he performs wonderful activities, if he is youthful, if he has personal beauty, a good education and good wealth, and if he is nonetheless not proud of his opulences, it is to be understood that he is especially favored by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (SB 8.22.26)

# PARI PRAŚNA

**Question:** What is the law of receiving guests that could be learned from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam?

**Answer:** The law of reception in the codes of Vedic principles states that even if an enemy is received at home, he must be received with all respects. He should not be given a chance to understand that he has come into the house of an enemy.

When Lord Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by Arjuna and Bhīma, approached Jarāsandha in Magadha, the enemies were given a royal reception by King Jarāsandha. One guest enemy, namely Bhīma, was to fight with Jarāsandha, and yet they were given a grand reception. At night they used to sit down together as friends and guests, and in the day Bhīma and Jarāsandha would fight, risking life and death. That was the law of reception.

The reception law enjoins that a poor man who has nothing to offer his guest should be good enough to offer a straw mat for sitting, a glass of water for drinking and some sweet words. Therefore, to receive a guest, either friend or foe, there is no expense. It is only a question of good manners. (SB 1.18.28 P)

There is another example of guest reception by Bhīsmadeva, who received the powerful sages assembled at his deathbed from all parts of the universe. Although unable to welcome and receive them physically, he welcomed them well, by uttering sweet words with hearty expressions. (SB 1.9.9 P)

Mail us at [pradipika@vidyapitha.in](mailto:pradipika@vidyapitha.in) your questions on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Answers to shortlisted questions shall be published in the next issue of Bhāgavata Pradīkā.

## QUIZ CORNER

Suggest an  
ATTRACTIVE CAPTION  
for this image



Mail your caption to [pradipika@vidyapitha.in](mailto:pradipika@vidyapitha.in) with "December Quiz Corner" in the subject. The best caption(s) along with the your name will be published in the next issue.



Best captions for the last month's image:

**Fear Personified Yet Fearful**  
(By Biswajit Mohanta)

**Only Pure Love Can Catch Him**  
(By Gangaram)



**BHĀGAVATA  
PRADĪPIKĀ**

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

The only way to understand the Lord as He is, is by devotional service to the Lord, or by approaching the devotee of the Lord who always has the Lord in his heart. (SB 3.9.3 P)





When one takes up spiritual activities, one's entire material body is spiritualized. Similarly, in this material world, when the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement expands, the entire material world becomes spiritualized. (SB 7.9.33 P)



Just as a bee is always interested in the honey in the flower and does not consider the thorns and colors, highly qualified persons, who are uncommon, accept only the good qualities of others, not considering their bad qualities (SB 4.4.12 P)



In the Vedānta-sūtra, the living entities of different gradations are compared to candles or lamps with different candle power. For example, some electric bulbs have the power of one thousand candles, some five hundred candles, etc., but all electric bulbs have light. Light is present in every bulb, but the gradations of light are different. Similarly, there are gradations of Brahman. (SB 4.1.15 P)

## ANALOGY ARENA

Even if one is liberated, he nevertheless accepts the body he has received according to his past karma. Without misconceptions, however, he regards his enjoyment and suffering due to that karma the way an awakened person regards a dream he had while sleeping. (SB 5.1.16 P)



Eternal time moves very sharply, as if made of razors and thunderbolts. Uninterrupted and fully independent, it drives the activities of the entire world. (SB 6.5.19)



Since an earthen pot is the result of the actions of a potter, by seeing the earthen pot one can guess at the existence of the potter. Similarly, this material world resembles the spiritual world, and any intelligent person can guess how it is acting. (SB 8.3.14 P)







# BHĀGAVATA PRAVĀHA

The Flow of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam



# DUTIFUL HUSBAND & RESPONSIBLE RENUNCIANT

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Canto 3 Chapters 23-25]

by Vijay Krishna Kumar Das



*Devahūti serves Kardama Muni affectionately and pleases him. She requests for a child from him. Kardama fulfils her desire and nine daughters are born to her (SB 3.23). Kardama then remains with Devahūti to offer her one more son (Lord Kapila). Kardama offers his prayers to Lord Kapila and leaves for the forest (SB 3.24). Lord Kapila gives the knowledge of devotional service to his mother (SB 3.25).*

## Devahūti – An Exemplary Wife

By her loving services, Devahūti won the heart of her husband. She was extremely chaste. Understanding his desires, she served Kardama with great love, respect, intimacy, purity of body and mind and with her sweet words. She served him with complete sense control giving up all lust, pride, envy, greed, sinful activities and vanity. She constantly worked sanely and diligently. Gradually she grew weak and emaciated. She expected great blessings from her husband. Seeing her condition, Kardama was overcome with compassion. He desired to bestow upon her all the transcendental gifts he has received from his devotional service to the Lord, which can make one free from fear and lamentation.

## Devahūti Desires A Child

With choked voice, Devahūti asked her husband to fulfil the promise of giving her children, since bearing children through a husband is a praiseworthy quality of a chaste woman. Desiring to please his wife, Kardama created an aerial mansion, a suitable dwelling for their union, that could travel at his will. Kardama also arranged for a desire fulfilling lake, Bindu Sarovara, housed with a thousand young girls to serve Devahūti. The girls fully bathed the emaciated Devahūti and decorated her. Her face now shone with shining teeth, charming eyes, eyebrows and beautiful locks of hair.

## Kardama Fulfils His Promise

Seeing Devahūti regain her original beauty as a princess, Kardama, with increased fondness, placed her on the aerial mansion. Though seeming attached, he did not lose his glory as a self-controlled person. Travelling like air to other planets in that great mansion, Kardama even surpassed the demigods. In the aerial mansion, both enjoyed for hundred autumns which passed just like a moment. Kardama divided himself into nine forms and impregnated Devahūti with nine discharges of semen. On the same day, she gave birth to nine beautiful daughters.

## Devahūti's Predicament

Thus, fulfilling his promise, Kardama now desired to leave home for his real concern of spiritual realization. Pained Devahūti submits an indirect request for a son. Finding herself being cheated by māyā, she felt that she did not cultivate knowledge in the association of her saintly husband. She said, “After you go to the forest, your daughter would find their own suitable husbands and go away. But who will give me solace?”



**BHĀGAVATA  
PRADĪPIKĀ**

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

Although the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, is full in Himself, He appears in different yugas to demand the surrender of the conditioned souls so that they will benefit by becoming free from the material clutches (SB 7.9.11 P)





## Appearance of Lord Kapila

Remembering the words of Viṣṇu, Kardama replied back to Devahūti, “Do not be disappointed, the infallible Lord will shortly enter your womb as your son. He will cut the knot of attachment in your heart by teaching the knowledge of Brahman.” With full faith in the words of her husband, Devahūti worshiped the Lord with great respect, who then entered into the womb of Devahūti through Kardama. Brahmā appeared before the couple and addressed them. He said, “You accepted my instruction without duplicity and respect and have thus properly worshiped and honoured me. Your nine daughters are very chaste and will increase this creation by their own descendents. Offer them to the foremost of the sages with due regard for the girls’ temperaments and likings. Your son will be the foremost among the perfected beings approved by all the *ācāryas* of Sāṅkhya philosophy will be known by the name Kapila, and will increase your fame.” Thus blessing them, Brahmā left.

## Kardama Muni’s Humility

Understanding that the Lord has descended, Kardama approached Him in a secluded place and offered him prayers. He said, “Demigods become pleased after a long time. It takes many births for a mature yogi to see You. But the same Lord is now appeared in our house, to support His devotees, not considering the negligence of the ordinary householders like us. Now that You have appeared, I have become free of debt, so please give me the permission to renounce this world.”

## Kardama Muni Leaves Home

Hearing the words of Kardama Lord Kapila replied, “I have appeared in this world to explain the principles of self-realization for those desiring freedom from material desires. This path was lost in time. I have come to revive this knowledge of Sāṅkhya. I will also describe this knowledge to My mother, so that she will also attain perfection and will be freed from fear. Surrendering all your activities to Me, go as you desire and worship Me for eternal life.” Kardama circumambulated the Lord and with a pacified mind, he at once left for the forest. After Kardama Muni left, Lord Kapila Stayed at Bindu-sarovara to please His mother Devahūti.”

## Enquiry By Devahūti

Remembering the words of Brahmā, Devahūti began to question Lord Kapila. She said, “You are my transcendental eye and have arisen like the sun to dissipate the darkness of ignorance of the universe. Please dispel my illusion of *aham mameti* due to my false ego and created by your *māyā*. Please explain about the *jīva* in material world (*puruṣa*) and *prakṛti*.



## Lord Kapila Describes Ādhyātmika Yoga

Lord Kapila described to his mother the path followed by the devotees. He said, “I consider the yoga system concerning the soul i.e. ādhyātmika yoga, as the most beneficial as it causes detachment from material happiness and distress. The mind is the pivot. If the mind is attached to material modes, it causes bondage and if it is attached to the Supreme Lord, it causes liberation. When mind is cleansed of the impurities like lust and greed, one transcends material dualities. The mind reach this state by practising bhakti endowed with jñāna and vairagya, then one sees everything in the right perspective. One becomes indifferent to material existence and the material influence acts less powerfully on him.”

## Supremacy Of Bhakti

Lord Kapila continued, “Perfection in self realization cannot be attained unless one engages in bhakti, for that is the only auspicious path. Material association is the greatest entanglement. But association of *sādhus* opens the door of liberation. Kṛṣṇa-kathā in the association of *sādhus* is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and bestow ruci, āsakti, bhava and prema in sequence. Practice of jñāna and yoga is not complete without bhakti. A person endeavouring to control mind through yoga, comes to the correct path of yoga by thinking about My activities. Even a person practicing the cultivation of knowledge, achieves Me in this very life as impersonal Brahman, by developing bhakti.”

*To be Continued...*

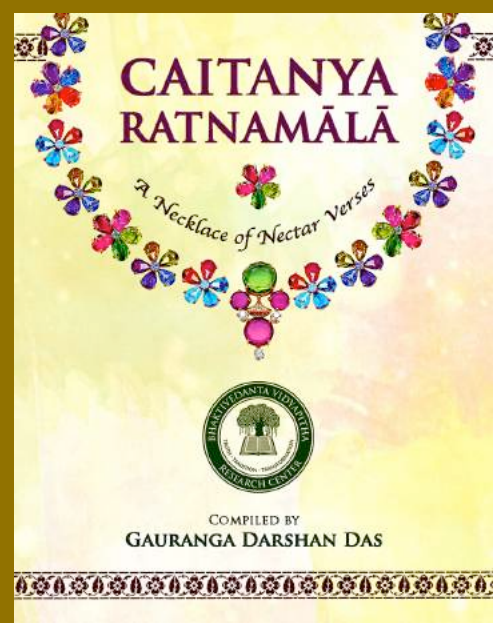
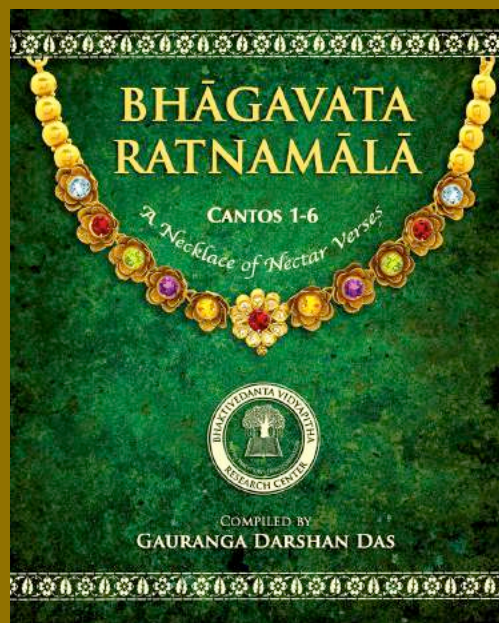
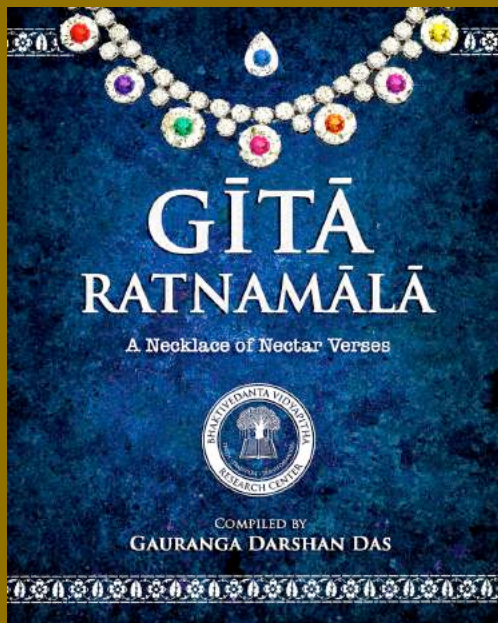






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## NOMENCLATURE

**SB:** Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

**CC:** Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta

**BG:** Bhagavad-gītā

**BS:** Brahma-saṁhitā

**1.1.1:** Canto 1, Chapter 1, Verse 1

**1.1.1 P:** From Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to SB 1.1.1 (If it is beyond Canto 10 Chapter 13, it is from the purport of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples)

**1.1.1 V:** From Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on SB 1.1.1.

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**BHĀGAVATA  
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Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

The material world is called illusory because it is a place of forgetfulness of the transcendental service of the Lord. (SB 3.10.5 P)